

NEWS – CONGRESSMAN PETE STARK

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STARK, DINGELL, 55 HOUSE COLLEAGUES ASK KING TO FOCUS HEARINGS ON ALL FORMS OF TERRORIST EXTREMISM

Letter Warns of Dangers of Singling Out One Religious Minority

WASHINGTON- Rep. Pete Stark (D-CA) and Dean of the House John D. Dingell (D-MI) were joined by 55 of their colleagues on a letter asking House Homeland Security Committee Chairman Pete King (R-NY) to refocus the upcoming hearings on Muslim Americans and homegrown terrorism to examine all forms of violence motivated by extremism. The letter urges Chairman King to look at extremist threats of all creeds, not narrowly singling out one faith to be under suspicion.

The text of the letter is below. For a PDF of the letter, please visit: <http://go.usa.gov/4lm>

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March 9, 2011

Dear Chairman King:

We are writing regarding the Homeland Security Committee's upcoming hearings, which you have stated will focus exclusively on radicalization among Muslim Americans and homegrown terrorism. We agree that Congress and all levels of government have a duty to protect America from terrorism, whether from abroad or homegrown. We are, however, deeply concerned that the stated narrow scope and underlying premises of these hearings unfairly stigmatizes and alienates Muslim Americans. We ask that you reconsider the scope of these hearings and instead examine all forms of violence motivated by extremist beliefs, rather than unfairly focusing on just one religious group.

We believe that the tone and focus of these hearings runs contrary to our nation's values. Muslim Americans contribute to our nation's wellbeing in many professions including as doctors, engineers, lawyers, firefighters, business entrepreneurs, teachers, police officers and Members of Congress. Their hard work helps to make our country exceptional.

Furthermore, casting a negative light on an entire community--- rather than focusing on actual dangerous fringes will only strain community relationships and trust that local, state and federal law enforcement agencies have worked hard to develop. Muslim Americans are an integral part of our larger American society and should be treated as such, not viewed with suspicion.

The choice between our values of inclusiveness and pluralism and our security is a false one.

If you wish to examine violent extremism, we ask that you do so by examining violence motivated by extremist beliefs in all its forms. Singling out one religious group and blaming the actions of individuals on an entire community is not only unfair, it is unwise-- and it will not make our country any safer.

Sincerely,

Pete Stark
John Dingell
Gwen Moore
Bob Filner
George Miller
Michael Capuano
Andre Carson
Gregory Meeks
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Judy Chu
Rush Holt
Marcia Fudge
Bobby Scott
Mike Honda
Mazie Hirono
Jan Schakowsky
Maxine Waters
Jesse Jackson, Jr.
Barbara Lee
Betty Sutton
Tammy Baldwin
Dennis Kucinich
Barney Frank
Jim McDermott
Jared Polis
James Moran
John Conyers
Luis Gutierrez
Madeleine Bordallo
Betty McCollum
Jose Serrano
Rick Larsen

Sheila Jackson-Lee
Raul Grijalva
Bobby Rush
Earl Blumenauer
Lois Capps
Al Green
Yvette Clarke
Eddie Bernice Johnson
Jim McGovern
David Price
Keith Ellison
Donna Edwards
Doris Matsui
Danny Davis
Ed Markey
Grace Napolitano
Lynn Woolsey
John Garamendi
Dale Kildee
Hank Johnson
Gary Peters
Susan Davis
David Cicilline
Zoe Lofgren
John Lewis

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